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Ephesians 2:8-9: CONTRADICTORY, OR PERFECTLY CONSISTENT



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Ephesians 2:8-9: Contradictory, or Perfectly Consistent?

Article In Brief...



Whether it be Bible skeptics trying to disprove the perfect consistency of Scripture, or denominational friends challenging the necessity of obedience (including water baptism), Ephesians 2:8-9 is often misunderstood and misused. However, when this beautiful statement is given a fair hearing, one discovers that it is neither self-contradictory nor inconsistent with any other statement of Scripture. Man is saved, not by works of merit, but by God's grace through a trusting, obedient faith.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

In his book *The Encyclopedia of Biblical Errancy*, longtime Bible skeptic Dennis McKinsey described "the biblical road to salvation" as "vague and conflicting."¹ He wrote: [I]f one were to accept the Bible as God's word and believe that heaven awaited those who gained entrance, one could never know for sure what must be done in order to reach heaven. The Bible is just too vague, too nebulous, too contradictory for even those who seek to follow its advice. This is because Scripture clearly outlines... different methods by which one can be saved and...the different methods are often either mutually

exclusive, divergent, or contradictory.²

In his monthly journal on alleged Bible contradictions, McKinsey commented on Ephesians 2:8-9, calling it

a passage contradictory within itself. It says you are saved through faith, while simultaneously calling salvation a gift of God. How can it be a gift when it must be earned? If you don't make an effort, if you don't have faith in Jesus, then you aren't saved. How, then, can it be called a gift completely divorced from any works on your part? You must do something—believe in Jesus—in order to receive it.³

Bob Seidensticker of patheos.com lists "Faith saves (or do works save?)" as #6 in his "Top 20 Most Damning Bible Contradictions." He quotes Ephesians 2:8-9⁴ saying, "That seems clear enough until we find the opposite claim elsewhere in the Bible.... For something so important as getting into heaven and avoiding hell, the New Testament is surprisingly unclear." Seidensticker then asks, "[M]aybe it's repentance that saves...or maybe baptism?" and lists Acts 3:19, Luke 24:47, Acts 2:38, and Romans 6:4 as alleged proof of a biblical inconsistency pertaining to salvation.⁵

Is the Bible really "unclear" about salvation? Is the one sentence recorded in Ephesians 2:8-9 self-contradictory? Are McKinsey, Seidensticker, and other skeptics correct in their assessment of this passage of Scripture? How can these verses be consistent with other verses that teach the need for sinners to repent and be baptized? What rational response, if any, can be given from Scripture for all the differences skeptics cite?

GETTING CONTEXT FOR EPHESIANS 2:8-9

Proper interpretation is impossible without consideration of the context in which statements are made. Even some of the simplest of sentences, such as "She's cold," cannot be understood without context. Does "She's cold" refer to a woman who is physically chilly because of low temperatures? Does she have a "cold" demeanor about her and seem unfriendly? Is she "cold" during a basketball game, because she has missed a lot of shots? Or, is

“she” even a woman? Perhaps “she” is someone’s pet Chihuahua that gets cold easily? Who can actually know what such a simple statement means without more information?

Ephesians 1:1

One of the best, most logical places to start when trying to understand any statement is “at the beginning.” Before abruptly jumping into Ephesians 2:8-9, it would be wise to go back to Ephesians 1:1 and learn some relevant information about the man who penned the letter and the people to whom he wrote.

Paul

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ” was not always a Christian. One might say that previously he was “Saul the sinner.”⁶ In fact, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom” Paul humbly stated “**I am chief**” (1 Timothy 1:15). How so? He “persecuted this Way [followers of Jesus] **to the death**, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women” (Acts 22:4). He said of his prior life as a non-Christian:

I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.... [M]any of the saints I shut up in prison...; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities (Acts 26:9-11).

Paul meekly remarked: “I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am

what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain” (1 Corinthians 15:9-10).

How could one of the world’s most notorious persecutors of God’s saved people come to **be saved**? How could a man guilty of so many atrocities be forgiven? Because, as Paul reminded the Ephesians, “God...is rich in mercy,” has “great love with which He loved us,” and “when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)” (2:4-5). Yes, “according to the riches of His grace” (Ephesians 1:7), God will save even the “chief” of sinners.

But how and when exactly was Paul, the penmen of Ephesians, saved? For that information, we have to refer back to the book of Acts. In chapter 22, we learn that when Saul the sinner asked Jesus, “What shall I do, Lord?” Jesus (Who had miraculously appeared to him on the road to Damascus) said, “Arise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for

you to **do**” (Acts 22:9-10). Saul then journeyed to Damascus and was told by God’s servant Ananias, “Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord”⁷ (Acts 22:16). Did he do just that? Indeed, he did. “[H]e arose and was baptized” (Acts 9:18). Was Paul saved by grace, through faith, and not of works? Absolutely. Did he have his sins washed away when he was baptized? For sure. Did he see any inconsistency in these matters? Not at all. In fact, after becoming a Christian himself, Paul preached the necessity of baptism,⁸ including in the city of Ephesus (Acts 19:1-5).

The Early Ephesian Church

As Paul was winding down his second missionary journey, he briefly stopped off in the grand city of Ephesus with Aquila and Priscilla and reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue (Acts 18:18-19). Paul then quickly departed for Antioch of Syria (from which he had begun his journey about three years earlier),

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but he left behind his two faithful Christian companions (Acts 18:18-21). Thus, the Lord's church existed in Ephesus at least since the time that Aquila and Priscilla were there.

A devout Alexandrian preacher named Apollos then came to Ephesus and "taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John." Thankfully, Aquila and Priscilla "took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately" (Acts 18:24-26).

Upon Paul's return to Ephesus (early on during his third major missionary journey), he found 12 disciples there (Acts 19:1) and discovered that they, too, only knew of the baptism of John, and knew nothing of the Holy Spirit (19:2-3). Similar to Aquila and Priscilla teaching Apollos "the way of God more accurately," Paul enlightened these men on the doctrine and baptism of Christ, after which "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (19:4-5).

This was the early church in Ephesus. These individuals (and likely others who were becoming disciples of Christ—Acts 19:17-20,26) were some of those who spent upwards of three years with Paul (20:31), including two years listening to him "reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus" (19:9-10). This was the early church who received the epistle we call Ephesians. These were the Christians (along with others) who were reminded that "by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). Like "Saul the sinner" who was bap-

tized into Christ for the remission of sins, these disciples also understood the perfect harmony of being saved by grace through faith apart from works as they submitted to the Lord in baptism.

Ephesians Chapters 1-3

The book of Ephesians is naturally divided into two parts. The first three chapters remind the young church of the amazing **blessings of being in Christ**—in the redeemed, forgiven, blessed Church of Christ (1:22-23). Chapters 4-6 remind the church in very plain and practical language to act like faithful followers of Christ—"to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called" (4:1).

Ephesians 2:8-9 is embedded in the heart of the first section of Ephesians in which Paul reminds the church of—something every Christian continually needs to celebrate—the gracious **salvation** from sin found **in Christ**.

- 1:3—God has "blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."
- 1:7—"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."
- 1:11—The heavenly "inheritance" is found in Christ.
- 2:5—Sinners are made "alive together with Christ" and saved "by grace."
- 2:13—Sinners "who once were far off" have been brought near to God "by the blood of Christ" and placed "in Christ Jesus."
- 3:7—Paul became a servant of Christ "according to the gift of

the grace of God...by the effective working of His power."

- 3:11-12—The grand plan to save sinful man "was according to the eternal purpose" of God, "which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him."

Repentance and Baptism in Ephesians

Although skeptics allege that repentance and baptism contradict Ephesians 2:8-9,⁹ Paul certainly didn't believe so. In addition to what we have already learned about Paul's conversion to Christ, as well as the early Ephesian Christians' baptism "in the name of the Lord Jesus," the book of Ephesians itself bears witness to the fact that Paul saw no contradiction between (a) being saved "by grace...through faith...not of works," and (b) repenting and being baptized.

Repentance

In the same paragraph of Scripture in which Ephesians 2:8-9 resides, Paul reminded these early Christians in the Roman province of Asia that "we all **once** conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh" and were "children of wrath" (2:3). Without knowing anything else, the clear implication of this statement is that they were **once** non-Christians who "walked" as "sons of disobedience" (2:2), **but now** are "in Christ" and act (or are supposed to act) completely different. They changed. They repented. While they **once** "walked" in darkness disobediently (2:1-3), they **now** are God's "workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared

beforehand that we should walk in them” (2:10).

Christians are to “no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk in the futility of their mind” (4:17). Children of God, who are recipients of the grace of God, are supposed to have repented, having “put off...the old man,” and “put on the new man” (4:22,24). While “no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God” (5:5), Christians are “imitators of God...and walk in love.... But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you”—that is, among repentant Christians (5:1-3).

Anyone who takes the time to read and digest Ephesians in its entirety, should quickly come to realize that **repentance is implied and described throughout the letter**. Surely this should have some bearing on a fair reading and interpretation of Ephesians 2:8-9.

Baptism

But what about baptism? Are we to believe that such verses as Acts 2:38 and Romans 6:3-4 (which skeptic Bob Seidensticker specifically cited in his “Top 20 Most Damning Bible Contradictions” article) are inconsistent with Ephesians 2:8-9? Is being “baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38) really incompatible with being saved “by grace...through faith...not of works”?

In addition to the fact that (1) Paul himself was baptized (Acts 22:16; 9:18), and (2) the Ephesians were baptized (Acts 19:1-5), (3) **within the book of Ephesians**

Paul listed baptism among one of the most fundamental, unifying teachings of Scripture. Paul begged the Christians in Ephesus to endeavor “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (4:3). He then listed seven essential “ones” upon which Christian unity is based: “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, **one baptism**; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (4:4-6). These seven ones are solid facts that undergird the Christian religion. And included in this exalted list, only a few verses away from Ephesians 2:8-9, is Paul’s mention of “baptism.”

Furthermore, in Ephesians 5:25-26, Paul noted how Jesus “loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her **with the washing of water** by the word.” Pray tell, what is this “washing of water”? Is it not logical to conclude it’s the same water baptism to which the Ephesians had already submitted after hearing Paul teach “the word” of God (Acts 19:1-5)? Did Paul, the penman of this statement in Ephesians 5, not comply with the command to “be baptized, and **wash away** your sins”

(Acts 22:16)? Shouldn’t it be clear that this reference to “the washing of water” in Ephesians 5:26 is the same “one baptism” that Paul had just highlighted one chapter earlier?

Do skeptics really expect us to believe that the apostle Paul was so incompetent and so prone to mistakes that he would pen such a beautiful statement as Ephesians 2:8-9 and then repeatedly contradict it throughout the same brief letter with implied and explicit references to repentance and baptism? Could it be (like many of our denominational friends who misunderstand these verses) that Paul’s teachings on faith, grace, repentance, baptism, and works are in perfect harmony with one another and that any perceived contradictions are mere misunderstandings on the part of the reader?

SO WHAT DOES EPHESIANS 2:8-9 MEAN?

“By Grace”

Just as it is humanly impossible to will oneself to return from **physical** death (once the soul has departed the body—Genesis 35:18), it is spiritually impossible to come back on one’s own accord from **spiritual** death. At one time the Ephesians





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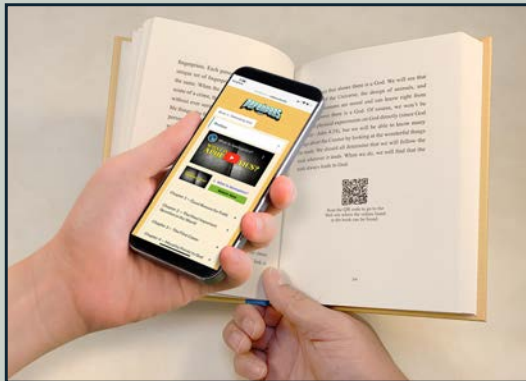


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were “dead in trespasses and sins” (2:1). They had “no hope” (2:12). Like all lost sinners, they were separated from God (Isaiah 59:2), on the path to eternal destruction (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9), and utterly **incapable** of devising and enacting a plan to save themselves—to bring themselves back into fellowship with God and have eternal life with him. “**But God**, Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).... For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:4-5,8-9).

Jesus did what no human being ever could do for himself: Jesus became the perfectly holy sacrifice Who voluntarily chose to take the just punishment for our sins (“death”—Romans 6:23) upon Himself in order to appease the infinite holiness and justice of God. Indeed, we are saved “by grace”! We are saved **by God**! There **was** no and **is** no “manmade” or “woman-willed” way to save ourselves. Salvation is not of human ingenuity. It is not the result of some great accom-

plishment on the part of mankind. The plan of salvation from spiritual death is **God’s** plan, accomplished in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ! Plain and simple: **salvation is undeserved and unearned**. It is “not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

A saved sinner no more “earned salvation” than a drowning man “earns a rescue.” I know a man who was once swept out to sea without a life jacket, a life preserver, or even a piece of floating wood to hold on to—and without any way to communicate to anyone. He repeatedly tried to swim the long way back to shore, but the strong wind and outgoing tide kept taking him farther and farther away. At last, he gave up trying to swim back to shore. At this point, he was exhausted and knew that his life was in someone else’s hands. If he was going to be saved from drowning in the open ocean, it would be the result of someone else’s work and not his own.

Thankfully, only a few hours later, this helpless man’s life was saved by the U.S. Coast Guard. His physical salvation was “not of himself” and “not of his works.” Even if asked to “hold on to the life preserver,” “put on the life jacket,” or “step up into the boat,” he would simply be following the instruction to be saved. He did not celebrate his rescue by boasting in “how he saved himself.” He acknowledged **his rescuers**, who used their time, money, energy, and talents to graciously save him from certain death. Similarly, spiritual salvation is “by grace,” “the gift of God.”

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“Through Faith...Not of Works”

Although critics of Scripture often make the “contradiction” claim about Ephesians 2:8-9, most people seem unaware of what actually constitutes a real contradiction. The Law of Contradiction is one of the most fundamental principles of logic. It states, as Aristotle noted, “that the same attribute cannot at the same time belong and not belong to the same subject and in the same respect.”¹⁰ In other words, if the same thing is said both to be and not be (1) for the same person, place, or thing, (2) at the same time, and (3) in the same sense (or respect), then a genuine contradiction exists. **However**, if one of the three aforementioned variables is untrue or is unknown, a person cannot logically contend that a contradiction necessarily exists.

So what does this have to do with Ephesians 2:8-9? Simply this: most people seem to **assume** that the word “works” (Greek *ergon*) is used in one (and only one) sense in the Bible; however, the word is used in at least four different ways in the New Testament.

1. There are “sinful works,” which Paul calls “works of darkness” in Ephesians 5:11 and “works of the flesh” in Galatians 5:19. The Ephesians

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obviously were not saved by “works of darkness.”

2. Paul often refers to “works” in the sense of “works of the law” of Moses (Romans 3:28; Galatians 2:16)—the old, annulled Law of Moses (Hebrews 8:7-13), which Paul mentions in Ephesians 2:15 as having been abolished.¹¹
3. Paul occasionally addresses **meritorious** works by which we are **not** saved (Titus 3:4-7), since, as noted earlier, sinful man could never “earn” salvation and spiritual blessings from our perfectly holy and just God.
4. Then there are works resulting from obedience of faith (James 2:14-24; Acts 26:20; Luke 17:10). These “works” are the active responses of those who trust in the gracious, saving plan and power of God.

Which “Works”?

In addition to Christians not being saved by the works of the Jewish law (Ephesians 2:15), Paul said in Ephesians 2:8 that salvation **“was not of yourselves.”** The apostle stressed this to Titus when he wrote that we are saved, “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy” (3:5). Then he highlighted to Timothy the fact that we are saved by the “power of God,” and “not according to our works” (2 Timothy 1:8-9). Man neither orchestrated nor carried out God’s one, acceptable scheme of redemption from sin. We don’t **earn** salvation; it’s impossible. The overall and immediate context of Ephesians seems clear that these meritorious works (and possibly the works of the law of Moses) are the kinds of works to which Paul was referring in Ephesians 2:8-9.

Self-Contradictory?

Many skeptics assume that the “not-of-works” salvation of Ephesians 2:8-9 is an indictment on **all** Christian “works” or “actions,” including faith, repentance, and baptism. Skeptic Dennis McKinsey called Ephesians 2:8-9 “contradictory within itself” because (a) salvation is not of works, yet (b) salvation is through faith. He asked: “How... can it be called a gift completely divorced from any works on your part?... How can it be a gift when it must be earned?... [Y]ou must do something...in order to receive” salvation.¹² McKinsey is exactly right that “you must **do something**” to receive salvation, but **that “something” is not the kind of negative works Paul alluded to in Ephesians 2:8-9.** McKinsey (like many others) simply confuses two different “senses” of the word “works,” and in the process wrongly assumes that there is a contradiction where none exists.

The first three aforementioned works certainly do not lead to salvation, but the last category (works resulting from obedience of faith; cf. Romans 1:5; 16:26) can be rightly called the “works of God.” This phrase does not mean works **performed** by God; rather, the intent is “works **required and approved** by God.”¹³ Consider what Jesus taught in John 6:27-29: “Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life.... Then they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, that we may work the **works of God**?’ Jesus answered and said to them, This is the **work of God**, that you believe in Him

whom He sent.” Within this context in John 6, Christ made it clear that there are “works” that humans must do to receive eternal life. Moreover, the passage affirms that **believing itself is a work** (“This is the **work** of God, that you **believe** in Him whom He sent”). Thus, McKinsey is correct that “faith” is a **type** of “work,” just not the type Paul mentions in Ephesians 2:9.

WHAT MUST WE “DO” TO BE SAVED?

Is “Doing” “Earning”?

The gift of salvation is not, as McKinsey asserts, “completely divorced from any works on your part.” We must “do” something—but the “doings” (or “works”) are a part of the approved, trusting-in-God, obedient acts that Paul and the other New Testament writers consistently addressed—in perfect harmony with one another. Think about it: when Paul (the non-Christian) looked up to Jesus and asked, “What shall I do, Lord?” (Acts 22:9), Jesus did not respond by saying, “Do? There is nothing to do.” On the contrary, Jesus said there were things **“to do”** (Acts 22:10), including being “baptized” (22:16). Later, when Paul was imprisoned in Philippi and was asked by the jailor, “What must I **do** to be saved?” Paul told him to “do” something: to “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 16:31).

But how can a person “do” anything to receive the gift of salvation and it not be “earned”? Even if the works resulting from obedience of faith are not the kind of works Paul alludes to in Ephesians 2:9, doesn’t any kind of “work” (including “faith”) nullify the idea of salva-

tion being a gift? Not at all. Think about it: If a friend wanted to give you \$1,000,000,000, but said that in order to receive the billion dollars you had to pick up a check at his house, take it to the bank, sign it, and cash it, would any rational person conclude that this gift was **earned**? Of course not. Even though **some effort was exerted** to receive the gift, the effort was not a work of merit, but an action of compliance—a joyful work of obedience.

Many scriptures indicate that man's efforts are often **not** categorized as works of merit. For example, God graciously **gave** the Israelites freedom from Egyptian bondage, but they still had to put forth some effort by walking from Egypt, across the Red Sea, and into the Wilderness of Shur (Exodus 15:22). Israel did not deserve manna from heaven; it was a **free gift** from God. Nevertheless, if they wanted to eat it, they were required to put forth effort in gathering it (Exodus 16; Numbers 11). Israel did not "earn" the land of Canaan (it was a **gift**—Deuteronomy 6:10-12,23), but they still exerted much effort (i.e., they **worked**) in possessing it. God **gave** the Israelites the city of Jericho (Joshua 6:2). But He gave it to them only **after** they followed His instruc-

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tions and encircled the city for seven days (Hebrews 11:30). These Old Testament examples clearly teach that **something can be a gift from God, even though conditions must be met in order for the gift to be received.**¹⁴ That is, people must "do" something to receive the gift—namely, obey (2 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 Peter 4:17).

Why Different Things to Do?

Why was the Philippian jailor told to "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved" (16:30-31), while thousands in Acts 2 were told to "Repent...and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (2:37-38), and Paul was told to "Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (22:16)? Why are three different answers given to the same general question about being saved? Is the New Testament "surprisingly unclear" about "getting into heaven and avoiding hell," as Seidensticker claims?¹⁵ Is "the biblical road to salvation...vague and conflicting," as McKinsey alleges?¹⁶

The reason that three different answers were given to the question of salvation is because on each occasion the questioners were at different "locations" on the road to salvation. The Philippian jailor was commanded to believe in Christ, because he had not yet heard and believed the saving message of Jesus (Acts 16:31-32). It would have been pointless for Paul and Silas to command the jailor to repent or be baptized when he had not yet even heard the Gospel. If today, a Muslim, Hindu, or Buddhist, asked a Christian the same question the Philip-

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pian jailor asked Paul and Silas, the same answer would need to be given. The Jews on Pentecost had already heard Peter's sermon when they asked their question about salvation (Acts 2:37). Peter knew that they already believed, and that such belief came from hearing the message he preached (cf. Romans 10:17). The Jews had passed the point of belief (being "pricked in their heart"), and were told to "repent...and be baptized" in order to receive salvation (cf. Mark 16:16).

Still, someone might wonder why Ananias neglected to tell Saul to believe or repent when he informed him about how to have his sins washed away. The reason: Saul already was a penitent believer in Christ by the time he came in contact with Ananias. Saul did not need to be told to believe or repent, since he had already done so. He knew the Lord existed, having spoken directly with Him on the road to Damascus, and he expressed a penitent attitude by praying to God and fasting for three days (Acts 9:9,11). At this point, Saul lacked only one thing: he needed to be baptized (Acts 22:16).

The reason these sinners were told three different things regarding salvation was because they were at different starting points when they

asked the question, “What must I do to be saved?” The unbeliever was told to believe. The believers were told to repent. And the penitent believer was told to be baptized. The three statements may be different, but they are not contradictory. For a person to become a child of God, he or she must do all three.¹⁷

CONCLUSION

Just as a recipe is not meant to be read and followed in part, nor are the ingredients meant to be understood in contradiction to each other, the Bible will never be properly understood until the complimentary nature of it is considered. Paul reminded the elders of the church at Ephesus that he had taught them the “whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27), but he didn’t teach it all in one passage. Rather than cherry-picking one verse here and one verse there and forcing one’s own preferred meaning onto the text, an honest and conscientious Bible student will interpret statements in their context and in light of **all** that Scripture says on the matter (Psalm 119:160).

When the beautiful statement in Ephesians 2:8-9 is given a fair hearing, one discovers that it is neither self-contradictory nor inconsistent with any other statement of Scripture. Man is saved, not by works of merit, but by God’s grace through a trusting, obedient faith.¹⁸

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Dennis McKinsey (1995), *The Encyclopedia of Biblical Errancy* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus), p. 332.
- ² Ibid., p. 313.
- ³ Debate,” *Biblical Errancy*, 149:1116, May.
- ⁴ As well as Romans 3:28.
- ⁵ Damning Bible Contradictions (2 of 4),” *Cross Examined*, October 22, <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/crossexamined/2018/10/top-20-most-damning-bible-contradictions-2-of-4/>.

to Paul as “Saul” (from Tarsus). After Saul’s conversion to Christ, and once he began his first missionary journey, Luke noted that “Saul...also is called Paul” (Acts 13:9). From that point forward (other than when Paul was detailing his past conversion to Christ in Acts chapters 22 and 26), the New Testament writers (including Paul) never used the name “Saul” again, only “Paul.”

the name of the Lord,” see <http://apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=6&article=775>.

6:1-4; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 3:26-29; Colossians 2:11-12.

individuals within “Christendom” that baptism is unnecessary for salvation since we are saved “by grace...though faith...not of works.”

Metaphysics, trans. W.D. Ross, <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/metaphysics.4.iv.html>, 4:3.

enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances....” Cf. Romans 6:14; Galatians 3:10; Galatians 4:5; Colossians 2:14.

McKinsey (1996), 149:1116.

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker), p. 248, emp. added.

tary nature between (1) the gift of grace

and (2) obedient faith, see “Taking Possession of What God Gives: A Case Study in Salvation,” <http://apologeticspress.org/apPubPage.aspx?pub=1&issue=555>.

Seidensticker.

McKinsey (1995), p. 332.

28:19; Mark 16:16.

cal faith, see “Believing’ in John 3:16,” <http://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=11&article=5723>.

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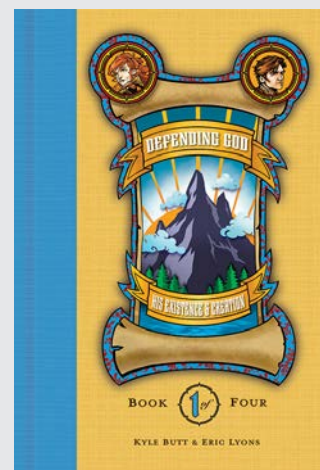
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